

# A Problem of Conflicting Loyalties? The Knights Hospitallers in Scotland In The Later Middle Ages

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The crusading movement was by its very nature a cosmopolitan movement which depended for its success upon its ability to transcend and overcome national particularism. This was also true of the institutions which arose out of the crusades, and in particular the "military orders" of the Knights Templars and Hospitallers. Participation in the Christian holy war against the infidel, particularly in the eastern Mediterranean, was the *raison d'être* of these institutions; and the Hospitallers continued to perform that function, with varying degrees of success, long after the crusades themselves, and most other institutions which had originated as a result of them, had come to an end. In the later middle ages, factors such as wars between Christian nations and the Great Schism created difficulties in the smooth operation of such a cosmopolitan international institution as the Hospitallers.<sup>1</sup> The present study explores the particular problems of one small, remote outpost of the Hospitaller organisation, its preceptory of Scotland, and examines ways in which Scottish brothers of the order reconciled their loyalties to their nation and to the international organisation to which they belonged.

Some years ago, Professor Charles Tipton challenged what he regarded as accepted opinion, and argued that the Great Schism did not have a divisive effect on relations between the Knights Hospitallers in England and Scotland; he argued rather that "we may...discard the view that the Great Schism divided the English and Scottish Hospitallers".<sup>2</sup> A re-examination of the evidence, however, suggests that the latter view itself may be in need of modification.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Hospitallers in Scotland had been mostly Englishmen, administering the Scottish possessions of their order as a preceptory appended to the priory of England.<sup>3</sup> So closely identified with England had they become that during the Anglo-Scottish war of the early fourteenth century, the Hospitallers dwelling at Torphichen in West Lothian had permission

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, A.T. Luttrell, "Intrigue, Schism, and Violence among the Hospitallers of Rhodes: 1377-1384", *Speculum*, xli (1966), 30-48 (reprinted in A.T. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece, and the West* (Variorum, 1978), cap. XXIII).

<sup>2</sup> C.L. Tipton, "The English and Scottish Hospitallers during the Great Schism", *Catholic Historical Review*, lii (1966-67), 240-5.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis*, ed. C. Innes (Edinburgh, Spalding and Maitland Clubs, 1845), ii, 315-6; *Liber Cartarum Sancte Crucis*, ed. C. Innes (Edinburgh, Bannatyne Club, 1840), 43.

from Edward I to take refuge in time of crisis in the English-garrisoned castle of Linlithgow, some five miles to the north.<sup>4</sup> The victories of king Robert I, and the decisive battle of Bannockburn, made it impossible that this relationship could continue unchanged. Towards the end of 1314, the Hospitallers in Scotland came into King Robert's peace,<sup>5</sup> and thereafter until the middle of the fourteenth century preceptors of the Hospital in Scotland are mostly men with Scottish names: brothers Ralph de Lindsay, Robert de Fordoun, Alexander de Seton and Thomas de Lindsay can almost certainly all be identified as members of prominent Scottish noble families.<sup>6</sup> In the first half of the fourteenth century, there was already, however, a developing tendency for large tracts of Hospitaller property to be let out to laymen; in the case of one estate let out in this way, Temple Liston in West Lothian, it is known that it had previously been a Templar property, and it is possible that the Hospitallers had to rely on laymen because of the extent of the windfall that came their way on the fall of the Templars.<sup>7</sup>

After the preceptorship of brother Thomas de Lindsay, who was last heard of in January 1356/7, there followed a period in which there are no recorded brothers of the order active in Scotland, but all Hospitaller properties in Scotland were administered by laymen and secular clerics. Master David de Mar, treasurer of the diocese of Moray and papal chaplain, was sent by the grand master of Rhodes to Scotland in 1356, and thereafter administered the order's estates in the north of Scotland for more than twenty years; during part at least of this time he made payments of responsions directly to the common treasury at Rhodes.<sup>8</sup> The administration of Hospitaller properties in southern Scotland during the same period seems to have been in the hands of Sir Robert de Erskine, a relative of the earl of Mar.<sup>9</sup>

David de Mar had been appointed by the grand master directly, and paid his responsions directly into the common treasury; but he may have been dilatory in his payments, for in 1374 the grand master (brother Robert de Juilly) appointed a new administrator, despite the fact that Mar and Erskine were still active. He was Robert Mercer, lord of Innerpefferay, and the master may have hoped that a more regular payment would result from his administration as well as a greater annual yield; Mercer's annual dues were settled at double the amount previously owed to the common treasury.<sup>10</sup> In this, the grand master

<sup>4</sup> *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland [CDS]*, ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh, 1881-88), ii, no. 1733.

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Record Office [SRO], GD119/3.

<sup>6</sup> For acts of these four brothers, see W. Robertson, *An Index drawn up about the Year 1629, of many Records of Charters* (Edinburgh, 1798), 11; SRO, RH6/114, 115, 118, 120, 122, 123.

<sup>7</sup> Robertson, *Index of Charters*, 11.

<sup>8</sup> National Library of Malta, Archives of the Knights of St John, Cod. 319, fos. 40r-41r.

<sup>9</sup> Legal documents suggest a relationship between Mar, Erskine, and Sir William More, who had earlier held the lease of Temple Liston: see SRO, GD124/1/110 and 516.

<sup>10</sup> *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Papal Letters*, ed. W.H. Bliss and others (London, 1893-in progress), iv, 205.

was to be disappointed; not only did Mar and Erskine conspire to prevent Mercer making his payments to the common treasury, but they were joined in this action by brother Robert de Hales, prior of England. Hales complained to the grand master that he should have been consulted in Mercer's appointment, and persuaded king Edward III to place an arrest on responsions bound from England to Rhodes until English superiority over the Hospitallers' properties in Scotland had been confirmed.<sup>11</sup>

The entry of Hales into the conflict added a new dimension, in that for the first time the grand master and the prior of England had come into conflict over the administration of Scotland. The prior's superiority had never really been questioned; even though there had been Scots as preceptors and lay administrators in Scotland since Robert I's reign, they had always owed obedience to the prior, and there is no evidence that any of them had ever tried to escape from it.<sup>12</sup> The conflict between Hales and Juilly over Scotland probably reflects circumstances which had little to do directly with Scotland; Delaville le Roulx suggested that Hales's disobedience to the master was prompted by "le dévouement aveugle qu'il avait voué à Edouard III<sup>e</sup>, et qu'il paya de sa vie" during the English revolt of 1381.<sup>13</sup> Pending a decision in the case between Hales and Juilly, the pope appointed brother Henry de St Trond, preceptor of Avalterre, to govern the revenues of Scotland.<sup>14</sup> In the end, the arrest of responsions by the English king proved decisive, for the grand master backed down, confirming the superiority of the prior of England over the Scottish lands of the order, and securing the release of the arrested moneys.<sup>15</sup> The whole incident can only have served to weaken the authority of the grand master; an open, and successful, act of disobedience by a senior officer of the order against the grand master was more serious than is implied by Professor Tipton's remark that it "effectively jogged the grand master's memory so that he recalled the fact that Scotland was indeed subject to Hales".<sup>16</sup>

In 1379, the year following the outbreak of the Great Schism, Robert Grant, layman of the diocese of Moray, was appointed overseer of the Hospitallers' properties in Scotland by the grand master, brother John Ferdinand de Heredia, with English consent.<sup>17</sup> He seems to have

<sup>11</sup> *Calendar of Papal Letters*, iv, 110, 140-2.

<sup>12</sup> Brothers Robert de Fordoun and Alexander de Seton, for instance, had acknowledged the superiority of the prior of England: *Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III, 1343-1345* (HMSO, 1902), 59, 201, 469, 520.

<sup>13</sup> J. Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes jusqu'à la Mort de Philibert de Naillac, 1310-1421* (Paris, 1913), 195.

<sup>14</sup> *Calendar of Papal Letters*, iv, 140-2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Tipton, "English and Scottish Hospitallers", 241.

<sup>17</sup> *Papal Letters to Scotland of Clement VII of Avignon, 1378-1394*, ed. C. Burns (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1976), 87; Malta, Cod. 346, fos. 121r-v, 236r-v.



been successful in persuading the leaseholders of Hospitaller properties to pay their responsions; Sir Robert de Erskine made payments in 1380 and 1382, while his son and successor Sir Thomas de Erskine rendered an account in 1387. In 1383, Grant had a papal warrant to cite David de Mar to answer for non-payment of sums due from properties in the north of Scotland.<sup>18</sup>

All of these men were laymen or secular clerics; for more than thirty years one searches in vain for brothers of the order active in Scotland. Finally, in 1388, there appears one brother John de Binning (whose name is probably Scottish), "governor of the lands and goods of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland", who had safe-conduct to come and go to England on business of the order.<sup>19</sup> During the Great Schism the Hospitallers, with their multi-national composition, found themselves in a difficult position. France, Scotland and Rhodes itself supported Clement VII after 1378, while England supported Urban VI. Thus, there was no difficulty for Scottish Hospitallers to retain their loyalty to Avignon and Rhodes, but more of a problem for English brothers active in Urbanist England. Some English brothers may have flirted with the Urbanist "anti-grand master", brother Richard Caracciola, but for the most part, as Dr A. T. Luttrell has remarked, "English Hospitallers and their *responsions* continued to arrive in Clementist Rhodes".<sup>20</sup>

Relations between English and Scottish Hospitallers are less clear during the schism; it is doubtful whether one can speak of regular intercourse between English and Scottish brothers, as there is no evidence of contact between the English priory and the Scottish preceptory between 1388 and 1402. In the latter year, the grand master, brother Philibert de Naillac, created the prior of England procurator and special messenger for the recovery of Hospitaller properties in Scotland which were being unjustly detained.<sup>21</sup> In 1404, brother Hildebrand Wotton was sent to Scotland to obtain sums of money due from one of the Forresters of Corstorphine; it is not clear whether it was he or another English brother, Hildebrand Inge, who was later described by Benedict XIII as Hildebrand Angelicus, a schismatic, who had been preceptor of Torphichen and who was succeeded by brother John de Binning.<sup>22</sup> Binning was in Scotland in 1408, when he had safe-

<sup>18</sup> Malta, Cod. 48, fos. 59r, 146v (assuming the names "Robert d'Arquin" and "Thomas d'Arguin" to be forms of Robert and Thomas de Erskine, and "Robert Griay" to be a form of Robert Grant); Malta, Cod. 322, fos. 52r-53v; *Letters of Clement VII*, 87.

<sup>19</sup> *CDS*, iv, no. 378.

<sup>20</sup> Luttrell, "Intrigue, Schism, and Violence", 47; C.L. Tipton, "The English Hospitallers during the Great Schism", *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, iv (1967), 89-124, is a rather one-sided presentation of the evidence.

<sup>21</sup> Malta, Cod. 322, fos. 110v-111r.

<sup>22</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae in Turri Londonensi et in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi Asservati* (London, 1814), ii, 167; *Papal Letters to Scotland of Benedict XIII of Avignon, 1394-1419*, ed. F. McGurk (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1976), 238-9, 250. *Anglicus* or *Angelicus* could well be a Latinisation of Inge or of the Scottish surname

conduct from Henry IV to travel via England and Calais to France for discussion of matters concerning the order.<sup>23</sup> Probably the reason was that in 1407 France had withdrawn allegiance from Benedict XIII (to whom Scotland was to remain loyal for a further eleven years), and in 1409 was to go over to the Pisan pope along with England and the Empire.<sup>24</sup> Binning was confirmed in his position at Torphichen by the grand master de Naillac in 1410.<sup>25</sup>

This was a necessary move, as Scotland and Rhodes now adhered to different popes. A layman, Alexander de Leighton, reported to Benedict XIII at Peníscola that brother John de Binning had been provided to Torphichen by brother Philibert de Naillac, schismatic, “formerly” grand master and now deposed by the pope, and in 1411 Benedict XIII appointed mandataries to investigate and depose Binning.<sup>26</sup>

In 1412, Leighton was provided by Benedict, calling him a brother of the order, “to the perceptory called priory of Torphichen” unlawfully occupied by Binning.<sup>27</sup> The designation of Torphichen as a priory rather than a mere perceptory was not new,<sup>28</sup> but Leighton appears to have had the ambition to make Scotland independent of England in fact. In 1414 he, Binning, and a third brother, Thomas Goodwin (who appears for the first time), were summoned by the prior of England to London to attend a provincial chapter,<sup>29</sup> but Leighton may have been reluctant to attend, and in January 1414/5 he was at Arbroath issuing a charter in which he is styled “Brother Alexander de Leighton, knight of the order of St John of Jerusalem, prior of Torphichen”.<sup>30</sup> Clearly, he had been largely successful in gaining control over the Hospitallers’ properties in Scotland; this was probably

Inglis. Sir Thomas de Erskine allegedly claimed the right of presentation to vacant Hospitaller churches from Hildebrand Anglicus, and that perhaps implies a time before Wotton was sent to Scotland (*Letters of Benedict XIII*, 250); Hildebrand Inge had been appointed collector for England by the anti-grand master Caracciola in 1384, and so was contemporary with Thomas de Erskine (Tipton, “English Hospitallers during the Great Schism”, 106-7; Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, 251).

<sup>23</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae*, ii, 190.

<sup>24</sup> On Scotland’s anomalous position during the later stages of the Schism, see R. Nicholson, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974), 243-6.

<sup>25</sup> Malta, Cod. 336, fo. 139r.

<sup>26</sup> *Letters of Benedict XIII*, 238-9.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 261-2.

<sup>28</sup> For example, in Malta, Cod. 323, fo. 138r; this is a bull of grand master de Heredia addressed to Gerard de Vienne and Peter de Provins, prior and receiver of France respectively, concerning provision to the vacant “rectoria ecclesie parrochialis de Cultir Abirdon’ diocesis, quod dependet a domo seu baiulia de Torphyhyne prioratus nostrj Scocie”. This is the church of Maryculter in Aberdeen diocese, and not Abington, as Professor Tipton thought (Tipton, “English and Scottish Hospitallers”, 243, n. 13). Abington, on the Clyde in upper Lanarkshire, is in Crawfordjohn parish, and did not have a parish church.

<sup>29</sup> CDS, iv, no. 857.

<sup>30</sup> *Registrum Episcopatus Brechinensis*, ed. P. Chalmers and C. Innes (Edinburgh, Bannatyne Club, 1856), i, 18-9, 37.

due to the Scottish government's strongly pro-Benedictine stance. Leighton again wrote to Benedict XIII in March 1415, complaining that Binning and Goodwin had conspired with Philibert de Naillac and other schismatics in supporting Alexander V and John XXIII, and had detained certain revenues lawfully due to him.<sup>31</sup> The following January (1415/6), de Naillac ordered Leighton to appear before him at the Council of Constance because of litigation among the brothers in Scotland.<sup>32</sup> It is unfair to be too censorious of "Leighton's activities and the trouble they provoked"; he was, after all, adhering to the loyalty of his nation, a fact curiously ignored by Professor Tipton.<sup>33</sup>

In 1418, Scotland finally abandoned Benedict XIII, almost the last country in Europe to do so. In the same year Leighton at last came to terms with the grand master, whose authority he had been effectively defying for some seven years. He attended the knights' assembly held at Avignon along with three Spanish brothers who had carried out a visitation of Scotland to resolve internal disputes among the brothers there. Their rather surprising decision was that Leighton should continue to administer the lion's share of the order's revenues in Scotland; Binning was allotted the church of Torphichen and some lands in Torphichen parish, while Goodwin was left with the church of Balantrodoch (now Temple, Midlothian) and some adjacent properties. Leighton's income was probably somewhere in the region of three times that of Binning and Goodwin put together.<sup>34</sup> The settlement probably represents an acceptance of the status quo in Scotland, and perhaps also suggests the usefulness of attending the convent in person, as Leighton did.<sup>35</sup> It must have been a disappointment for Binning, who had been loyal to grand master de Naillac throughout.

The resolution of the schism is not the end of the story. In 1420, brother Thomas Goodwin attended the chapter-general at Rhodes, where he asserted that the preceptory of Scotland was not annexed or subject to the priory of England, and that Scottish brothers should not be subject to brothers of another province. Despite the objections of the prior of England, he was allowed a term of one year to return to Scotland and gather evidence in support of his case. Goodwin failed to return a year later, but (again despite pressure from English knights) the grand master extended his term for a further year. When, in 1422, he still failed to appear he was declared contumacious, and arguments of English superiority over Scotland were accepted on the basis of chancery registrations of bulls in favour of brother Robert de Hales issued forty years earlier.<sup>36</sup> Of this incident, Tipton comments simply

<sup>31</sup> *Letters of Benedict XIII*, 312-3.

<sup>32</sup> Malta, Cod. 338, fo. 129r.

<sup>33</sup> Tipton, "English and Scottish Hospitallers", 245.

<sup>34</sup> Malta, Cod. 342, fo. 130r-v.

<sup>35</sup> Leighton had licence to proceed from Avignon to Rhodes and return again on 23 August 1418: Malta, Cod. 342, fo. 130v.

<sup>36</sup> Malta, Cod. 346, fos. 121r-v, 236r-v.



that "the chapter-general of the order, held on Rhodes in 1422, again confirmed the supremacy of the prior of England over the Scottish knights".<sup>37</sup> But the documents show that this did not happen without a struggle, and do not really support Tipton's thesis that "relations between the two groups remained amicable".<sup>38</sup>

A further piece of evidence has even more damaging consequences for this thesis. In 1426, brother William Hules, prior of England, wrote to pope Martin V stating that during the Great Schism "it happened that the realms of England and Scotland were divided in different obediences and the preceptory of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem was dismembered and separated from the priory of England" and was held for a time by Alexander de Leighton (by this time deceased); Hules petitioned that the pope would reintegrate the preceptory of Scotland into the priory of England, of which it had been a member before the schism, and grant it to Hules as a *commendam*.<sup>39</sup>

To argue that "no secession took place" is untenable;<sup>40</sup> but the secession does not appear to have come until the later stages of the schism, when Scotland was largely isolated in support of Benedict XIII. English brothers, despite their country's Urbanist allegiance, remained loyal to Rhodes and to grand master de Heredia, and for the most part ignored the anti-grand master Caracciola. In Scotland, a complex situation arose after 1409, with Binning apparently loyal to grand master de Naillac and Leighton succeeding not only in controlling most Hospitaller property in Scotland himself, but also in splitting Scotland from the English priory. After the healing of the schism in 1418 and Leighton's death shortly thereafter, brother Thomas Goodwin tried unsuccessfully to maintain the independence of the Scottish preceptory; the return to dependent status was confirmed by the chapter-general of Rhodes in 1422 and by the pope in 1426.

The picture which emerges suggests that a degree of tension between English and Scottish Hospitallers did exist, and came to the surface at times such as Hales's disobedience to the grand master or the conflict of loyalties during the later stages of the schism. Despite generally harmonious relations during the later middle ages, this picture is confirmed by subsequent events. All Scottish brothers from the 1430s onwards acknowledged the superiority of the prior of England, and some of them attended English provincial chapters.<sup>41</sup> But the careers of some Scottish Hospitallers show that this situation had its

<sup>37</sup> Tipton, "English and Scottish Hospitallers", 245.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 240.

<sup>39</sup> *Calendar of Scottish Supplications to Rome*, ed. A.I. Dunlop and others (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1934-70), ii, 137-8.

<sup>40</sup> Tipton, "English and Scottish Hospitallers", 245.

<sup>41</sup> For example, brother Andrew de Meldrum was regularly summoned to English provincial chapters throughout the 1430s, and acknowledged the obedience which he owed to the prior of England: *CDS*, iv, nos. 1058, 1066, 1075, 1087, 1104, 1117.

disadvantages for Scottish brothers, and it is worth examining a few examples.

Patrick Scougal was a member of a prominent East Lothian family<sup>42</sup> who first appears as an esquire living in the household of the Scottish preceptor at Torphichen in 1458.<sup>43</sup> By 1462, he had himself become a brother of the order, and was living as a conventual knight at Rhodes.<sup>44</sup> Upon the death of the preceptor (brother Henry de Livingston), he hurried back to Scotland, gained possession of Torphichen, and administered it throughout the mid-1460s.<sup>45</sup> But he had not secured regular promotion to the vacant preceptory at Rhodes, and in 1466 the preceptory was conferred by the grand master, with consent of the English brothers at Rhodes, on another Scot, William Knollis.<sup>46</sup> Knollis had not fulfilled the minimum qualifications of five years' membership of the order and three years' residence at Rhodes, but he was able to procure dispensations and confirmations from the grand master and the pope.<sup>47</sup> Scougal returned to Rhodes and continued the dispute before the grand master and the English brothers into the 1470s, but never succeeded in ousting Knollis from Torphichen;<sup>48</sup> and when he applied for promotion to a preceptory in England, he was opposed by English brothers on the ground that he was Scottish and not English, and therefore ineligible for promotion to a preceptory in England.<sup>49</sup>

In the sixteenth century, Scottish brothers were often made to swear at their reception that they would never seek promotion to a preceptory in England or Ireland, but only the single Scottish preceptory of Torphichen.<sup>50</sup> In 1569, brother James Irving, a Catholic refugee from Scotland who was joining the order in Malta, objected to the precondition that he should not seek promotion outside Scotland,<sup>51</sup> and secured a magisterial bull allowing him to petition for preceptories of the English tongue outside Scotland.<sup>52</sup> This was something of a hollow victory, since both Scotland and England were by this time firmly protestant, and all Hospitaller property in both kingdoms had become secularised and hereditary.

A striking example of the disadvantages faced by Scottish Hospitallers is shown by the career of brother George Dundas who died

<sup>42</sup> G.F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland* (New York, 1946), 715.

<sup>43</sup> Haddington, Colstoun House, Colstoun Writs, nos. 10, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Malta, Cod. 372, fo. 142v.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*; *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis*, ii, 315-6.

<sup>46</sup> Malta, Cod. 376, fo. 156r-v.

<sup>47</sup> *Calendar of Papal Letters*, xii, 269-71.

<sup>48</sup> Malta, Cod. 75, fo. 26r-v; Cod. 380, fo. 137v; Cod. 381, fo. 137r-v.

<sup>49</sup> Malta, Cod. 75, fos. 157v-158r.

<sup>50</sup> This happened to brothers Walter Lindsay and John Chalmers on their reception at Viterbo in 1525: Malta Cod. 411, fo. 158r-v; it happened also to brother Alexander Dundas in 1538: see *The Book of Deliberations of the Venerable Tongue of England*, ed. H.P. Scicluna (Malta, 1949) pp. xxv, 76-7.

<sup>51</sup> Malta, Cod. 92, fos. 180r-v, 181r.

<sup>52</sup> Malta, Cod. 432, fo. 180r-v.



in 1533. His career began in the Scottish royal household,<sup>53</sup> and it may have been there that he came to the attention of brother William Knollis, who acted as treasurer to King James IV. By 1504, he was a conventual brother serving at Rhodes, where he was given the right of expectation to succeed Knollis at Torphichen when the latter should die or resign.<sup>54</sup> In 1508, he returned to Scotland, presenting letters from the grand master to the king about the state of war against the Turks in the eastern Mediterranean. King James replied to the grand master that he was delighted to learn that Dundas had committed himself to warfare for Christendom, and thanked the master for his continuing favour to Scots and recognition of their deserts.<sup>55</sup> Late in 1508, the Scottish government admitted Dundas to the temporalities of the Hospitallers in Scotland, as he had been provided by the master of Rhodes.<sup>56</sup> After Knollis's death in 1510, Dundas had permission from the king to return to Rhodes with a substantial retinue.<sup>57</sup>

But King James had a short memory. Dundas was not long out of the country when the king's secretary, Patrick Paniter, secured papal provision to the preceptory, "vacant by the death of William Knollis", with James' help.<sup>58</sup> In 1511, Dundas went to Rome and secured a sentence against Paniter upholding his right to the preceptory.<sup>59</sup> During 1511 and 1512, Paniter and his royal patron bombarded various agents at the Roman curia with letters putting forward Paniter's claim to Torphichen.<sup>60</sup> They included technical arguments about how the vacancy had arisen, but were also concerned with the fact that Dundas had enlisted the help of the cardinal of York at Rome, and that of English brothers at Rhodes.<sup>61</sup> Litigation dragged on into 1513, while the situation between England and Scotland deteriorated. In March 1513, James IV wrote to grand master Guy de Blanchefort expressing his astonishment that preceptories and promotions in Scotland were granted out by English brothers at Rhodes, even if to Scottish subjects, and that Scottish responsions were paid through the prior and treasurer of the order in England; he complained that Scottish brothers must look upon the prior of England as lord and protector, and take before him cases touching the preceptory of Scotland. James claimed that, had he known about it earlier, he would not have tolerated such a situation.<sup>62</sup> It is not easy to credit the king's ignorance as totally genuine, and the

<sup>53</sup> *The Letters of King James IV, 1505-1513*, ed. R.K. Hannay, R.L. Mackie and A. Spilman (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1953), 101.

<sup>54</sup> Malta, Cod. 395, fos. 139r-v, 140r-v; SRO, GD119/6.

<sup>55</sup> *Letters of James IV*, 101.

<sup>56</sup> *Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scottorum*, ed. M. Livingstone *et al.* (Edinburgh, 1908-in progress), i, nos. 1771-2.

<sup>57</sup> *Letters of James IV*, 174, 178.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 188.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 210-11.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 210-11, 219, 229-31, 234-6.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 265-6; see Malta, Cod. 395, fos. 139r-v, 140r-v, 141r, 142v.

<sup>62</sup> *Letters of James IV*, 296-7.

grand master sent back a prevaricating reply.<sup>63</sup> In the summer of 1513, James wrote back to the master reasserting that no Scot should be installed at Torphichen if he held the prior of England as superior "on the pretext that Scotland is English-speaking".<sup>64</sup>

The death of James IV at Flodden on 9 September 1513 was not the end of Dundas's problems. Three years later, the Scottish government was still complaining to the pope that Dundas had still not proved his case satisfactorily, was unreliable to be placed in such an important position, had obtained bulls through English intervention at Rhodes, and had come to Scotland with an English safe-conduct.<sup>65</sup> Not until 1518, when there was an Anglo-French rapprochement,<sup>66</sup> was Dundas able to settle at Torphichen. He repaid sums loaned to him by the prior of England for the defence of his rights at Rome and for his travelling to and from Scotland, and also resumed payments of responsions.<sup>67</sup> But he consistently refused to pay responsions for the eight years when he was excluded from possession of his preceptory, despite the insistent demands of the English priory and the common treasury.<sup>68</sup>

Dundas perhaps suffered more than any other Scottish Hospitaller because of Scotland's subordination to England within the order. He was regarded with suspicion by the Scottish crown because of his dealings with the English brothers at Rhodes (a matter in which he had no choice), he was excluded for eight years from possession of his preceptory for the same reason, and finally when he was allowed to return to Scotland his English friends confronted him with a bill for responsions due during his absence. Not surprisingly, despite his dependence on them, Dundas had no love for Englishmen; he provoked a verse by an English poet by reviving a time-honoured accusation:<sup>69</sup>

George Dundas,  
This Scottish ass,  
He rhymes and rails  
That Englishmen have tails.

One suspects that this sentiment must have been shared by quite a few Scottish Hospitallers in the later middle ages.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 308-9.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

<sup>65</sup> *The Letters of James V*, ed. R.K. Hannay and D. Hay (Edinburgh, 1954), 3.

<sup>66</sup> See G. Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII* (Edinburgh, 1965), 19-20.

<sup>67</sup> SRO, GD119/8 and 9.

<sup>68</sup> Malta, Cod. 54, fos. 14v-15r, 39v-40r, 63v, 90v, 118v, 148v-149r, 167v-168r; Cod. 411, fo. 157r-v.

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in J. Durkan, "Early Humanism and King's College", *Aberdeen University Review*, no. 163 (1980), 259-79, at 263.

<sup>70</sup> Dundas's bitterness may have been increased by the fact that two of his uncles were killed fighting the English at Flodden; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J.S. Brewer and R.H. Brodie, i (1920), pt. 2, no. 2313.